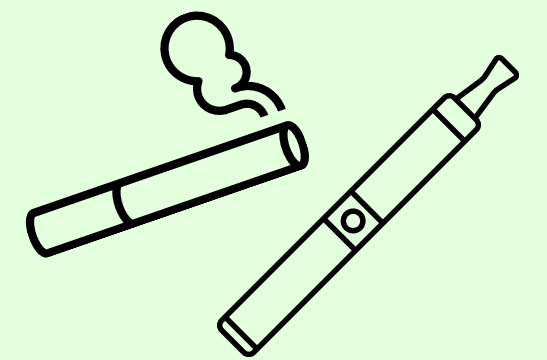




What a Waste! Environmental Impact of Cigarettes & E- Cigarettes

This leaflet summarises what your teenager will learn in You and Me NI Vape Free Lesson 3. It focuses on the environmental damage caused by cigarette and e-cigarette waste and how young people can help protect the planet.

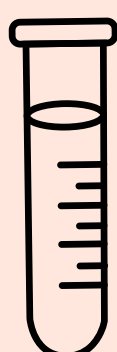
Cigarette & E- Cigarette Waste



- Cigarette butts are the most littered item globally and in Northern Ireland
- They contain toxic chemicals like arsenic and lead, which can poison animals and contaminate water
- Cigarette filters are made of non-biodegradable microplastics that persist in the environment

Toxic Vape Pods & Liquids

- Used pods still contain nicotine and heavy metals like lead and nickel
- These substances can cause nicotine poisoning in children and animals
- E-cigarettes are classified as both hazardous waste and electronic waste

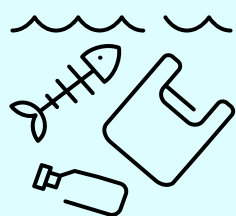


E-Cigarettes as Hazardous Waste



- E-cigarettes contain lithium-ion batteries, which can explode if crushed or improperly disposed of
- These batteries and other components leach heavy metals into soil and water, harming ecosystems

Plastic Pollution



- E-cigarettes contain large amounts of plastic that break down into microplastics
- Microplastics enter oceans and food chains, causing long-term environmental damage

Support Is Available



- Talk to your GP or pharmacist about Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRTs)
- [Talk to Frank textline \(82111\)](#)
- [Stanford My Healthy Futures](#)
- Cancer Focus quit services

Aerosol Exposure



- Vaping releases harmful chemicals into the air, including nicotine, ultrafine particles, and cancer-causing substances
- Secondhand aerosol affects others nearby, especially children
- Thirdhand aerosol sticks to surfaces and dust, posing risks through skin contact and ingestion



Key Takeaways for Parents

- Cigarettes and e-cigarettes may seem small, but their environmental impact is massive
- Your teen is learning how these products harm the planet and how they can make a difference
- Education and support can empower teens to make informed choices that protect both personal health and the environment